

HOW TO TEACH. First prepare the lesson before coming to class by finding out the *salient* parts of it.

When you come to give the lesson, first find out from the children their impressions. If the impression seems erroneous, correct it.

Let the children find out (with help if necessary), contrasts of proportions of length and height, and also contrasts in colours, and light and shade.

The natural gift of memory cannot be cultured; when there is a natural gift leave it alone.

In order to train the memory teach a child to describe *correctly* the object before it, and to use it so.

Imagination is not creation; it is combination and re-creation combined with the force of meditation.

Under the third head the importance of manual training as a factor of self-control is pointed out. Self-control results from manual training. It is useful for children who are somewhat intellectually dull. Miss Giles referred to Tadd's book of Manual Training, but she does not consider that the continued training of drawing and modelling in clay, wood, and stone, &c., could be carried on satisfactorily in this country, neither does she consider the drawings in the book to be of any use for designing purposes. She mentioned Sloyd, but did not tell us anything about it, as she was unable to do so. A short discussion followed, which was rather a *résumé* of the lecture.

## HOUSE OF EDUCATION.

It is pleasant to speak of what one loves, yet it is painful to feel that one does not do a subject justice. I cannot do my subject justice. I feel so very strongly about it that I can only beg you to forgive the futility that I fear has hidden the enthusiasm I feel.

I am going to try and tell you something about the "House of Education"—what it means to us who have studied there and learned to try and look on life and work a little in the same way as Miss Mason does.

I think the first thing a new student feels is the spirit of charity through the House. There are no sets, or sects, or cliques, or differences; each helps all; and Miss Mason loves all; so we must love each other. The spirit of being eager to help a brother is very strong. So often in college, the first fortnight of Freshers' lives is misery. They do not know where to go or what to do. It is not so with us. The second year students give themselves up to starting the new-comers straight. There is no superiority felt or shown. The few rules are explained, with the reason for their existence, and at once a new student is made a member of the community. Then gradually comes the realisation of the meaning of that community. We are part of a whole, working for the perception and appreciation of a great ideal.

We are learning what enthusiasm for childhood means. We are learning that it is the ideal in every child that we must look for, and learn from, the meaning of a child—not a thing to practise theories and clever teaching upon; not something to be shaped and moulded; not an idol to be worshipped, nor a nuisance to be managed; but a self, a mind, and body, a soul; how to recognise that soul and how to nourish the mind and body belonging to it. That is the purpose of the "House of Education" training. It comes out in everything we do. That is why so much pains are taken with the cultivation of the minds of the students, that



they may appreciate and respect the innate delicate refinement of a child's mind. No good student but acknowledges that she learns far more from her children than she can ever hope to teach them. We are taught to respect our children first. It comes in the earliest technical lessons—to respect their powers, their futures, their limitations, and possibilities.

Those who have read "Home Education" know what I mean by Miss Mason's three great negative commandments—hinder not, despise not, offend not. And a little child shall lead them.

I think from this comes the great virtue Miss Mason wishes us all to desire—that of humility. I cannot attempt to tell you what she tells us about that—self-knowledge and self-control—the sum of all the virtues our training endeavours to inculcate. And for that reason we have chosen for our motto—"For the children's sake"—with the rush for our badge. The humble plant that Virgil bound upon the head of Dante when he led him down to the shores of the lake at the foot of Purgatory before he might ascend through its terraces to Paradise.

And humility is learned through discipline. I have seen colleges where it seemed to me that no pucker was allowed to wrinkle the smoothness of a worker's lot; where students were cared for, and waited on, as many were very far from being in their own homes. And the result, I should think, would be the production of a very selfish and helpless set of women. Many could not work under such soft circumstances.

The life at Ambleside is a disciplined life in many senses; the mental work is hard, the hours are long, and you are expected to be at full pressure through them all (though I once heard rather a good comment from a visitor to a student who thought herself over-worked—"You must remember sitting in a desk is not working"). There is discipline of mind, in the books we read and the lectures we hear; discipline of body, in food and rooms, and long walks; discipline of hours, in the few rules concerning punctuality. It is a reign of law, and the breaking of that law by one is felt through the whole house. Miss Mason has one word for all breaches of discipline—lawlessness.

And yet the discipline must be self-taken, self-inflicted. No one makes you conform. The beauty of discipline is

pointed out to us, and the opportunities for practising it are provided. That is all. You may be a law to yourself if you like; no one will stop you. I mean no one of the powers. But public opinion will, and then you realise the power of sympathy of numbers. Individuals are never sent for and privately admonished. But a lecture may be given on the principle that underlies the particular fret of the moment, or a public appeal to the House to set right what was wrong. Then there is discipline for our affections and emotions. Each must know all, and each in turn spends an afternoon with each. Friendship is to be the aid, not the drawback, to college life.

The appreciation of a disciplined life is, I think, especially beneficial to those who, like most of us do, leave college to live in wealthy and luxurious homes. It helps to check that littleness of spirit that considers it undignified to put coals on the fire or fetch hot water, little things that make a governess such a nuisance in a house.

And those who live in rooms, where life is not so easy, have learned to love a certain hardness, and get above their sensations and surroundings.

Another hardly-practised and dearly-prized virtue at the "House of Education" is order.

Painfully is it realised that people are not all born tidy. But many become so. I have known several students in whom the improvement in this respect was prodigious. One must be tidy to live at peace with other people, especially if it is as intimately as sharing the same room. In this it is almost entirely the students who discipline themselves and each other. It is only one expression of that altruistic phrase—"Your rights and my duties."

A great deal of time is given to psychology, that through the study of the workings of our own minds we may understand those of our children. With that comes the study of the lives and teaching of the great educational reformers, from whom we build up our own methods. Then, in the second year, philosophy is taken. This is not so much for its utilitarian value, but as one of the means of self-culture offered us. For the same reason exceptional literary advantages are given to us. Miss Mason throws open her private library on Sunday, and all the week there



are books of reference and others for anyone to use whenever they wish.

In my day people in the neighbourhood used to come up to the House once a week and read papers touching on the life and work of some giant of letters, which would be illustrated by extracts read by students or the other guests.

Now the students get up these evenings themselves with, I believe, great success.

So we are shown the value of books, and doors of knowledge are opened to us, and we are led to seek and appreciate the best in all branches of literature.

The pictures that hang on the walls of the "House of Education" also help to cultivate the minds of its inmates. They are mostly prints from the Arundel Society, or photographs; one or two from Watts, the rest from the frescoes of early Italian Masters. We have lectures on Italian art from Mrs. Frith, who has studied the subject under Ruskin. To many this means an entirely new field of possibilities, and the wonderful teaching, the dignity, simplicity, and humility of the pictures, do not fail to leave their mark on those who are taught to understand them.

Among people who know us, students enjoy something of a reputation of being keen country lovers and extremely well informed on all matters relating to natural history. Miss Mason has herself an intimate knowledge of the manners and customs of the natural world, and somehow, though how exactly I cannot say, every student awakes with the spring to a passionate love for all the life that springs into being with the sunshine. They may have passed examinations in botany before, or they may scarcely know an oak from an ash. All make the study of trees, flowers, birds, and beasts, the one for which they filch half hours from sleep, or play, or meals, or other work. Every one becomes not only a student of natural history, but also an original discoverer. Yet, still keeping the artist's love of the beautiful, and the philosopher's respect for life and natural phenomena, before the collector's passion, or the scientist's thirst for knowledge.

We do not want our children to collect birds' eggs so much as we want them to know where to look for them; to know what birds build high and what low; the difference between a thrush's nest and a blackbird's when neither have

eggs; what birds sing first and when each stops singing. Where to find the first calandine, and to know that is not a place to look for buttercups. Where wild thyme grows and when and where to expect bog pimpernel. Not to gather reckless, wasteful, cruel bunches, but to love and recognise these little brothers in the world, as each year they bring their beauty fresh to us. I know that members of the Parents' National Education Union say that they want to open doors of wisdom, gates of knowledge for their children. That is exactly what the "House of Education" does for its students. It opens doors and sets their feet in paths that go on and on, and at every step there is more stretched out before and less that seems which is attained.

We do not leave the "House of Education" thinking that we know everything. We honour the education of our mothers, and more that of our grandmothers, and are ashamed of any student who dares to think she knows everything about anything, even if it is only tadpoles or basket-making. We are also ashamed of any (of us I mean) who say insects are horrible, or sleep with the window shut.

I have not said anything of the actual technical training; of the weeks we spend in the practising school, nor the criticism lessons we give, nor the lectures on practical education we receive; how to teach everything, from first reading lessons to the higher branches of mathematics. I should like to, but I do not want to bore you. I have tried to dwell on what seems to me the side that matters most. Every one there has the opportunity of doing two things—learning a trade or profession, that is honourable and lucrative; secondly, yet more important, training herself towards becoming a self-controlled, cultivated woman, with enthusiasm and common sense, knowledge and humility.